



## **Ethics In Buddhism: A Philosophical Retrospect Of Gautam Buddha In The Context Of Modern Society**

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### **Abstract:**

The present paper highlights the ethics of Buddhism which have philosophical context and is connected to modern society. Buddhist ethics are the essential parts of teaching, the psyche and freeing ourselves from pain. Buddha teaches us to inspect persistently whether or not what we believe, perform, and say reasons harm to ourselves and others. By means of ignoring the actions that reason harm, we can create grave headway toward waking up. This course focuses the theories about the environment and basics of ethical judgments and applications to contemporary moral questions. More importance is placed on moral theories such as consequentialism, deontology and asset principles. Buddhism is one of the world's largest religions. Buddhists consider that the human life is one of distress and those thoughts, divine and bodily labor and good behavior are the ways to attain illumination, or nirvana.

**Keywords:** Ethics, Buddhism, Philosophical, Retrospect, Gautam Buddha, Context, Modern, Society

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### **Introduction:**

Buddhism is an exclusive religious system that is not only measured as a faith to follow but it is a way of gaining illumination in existence. Gautam Buddha explains people the way following which they can achieve the decisive objective that is freedom afterlife. Buddha's whole method is going throughout a principled system that enriches the human psyche with love and understanding as well as plans the human body to reach freedom. Buddhism is mostly based on the Buddha's four noble truths and noble eight-fold path which are the basics of Buddhist ethical concept.

Gautam Buddha's extra-ordinary thoughts regarding the life and the world have an eternal survival. Gautam Buddha's ethical principles are the guidelines to lead a moral life which will exceptionally take a right follower to his or her actual fortune of liberation through correct spirit.

### **Statement of the Problem:**

Human beings wish to guide their life through

the glow of their understanding concerning themselves and the humankind. Consequently, it is a human's balanced personality to desire acquaintance. Hence, philosophy focuses 'love of wisdom' or 'pursuit of knowledge'. As a result, Philosophy is a method of pleasing this very sensible quest for facts. Buddhist ethics highlights the reality of life and is an effort to give coherent idea in the modern life.

#### **Review of Literature:**

1. Gautam Buddha's principles by conversation and his teachings were handed down for an extended time during oral instruction imparted by his disciples to successive generations.
2. Buddha's holistic teachings depends today primarily on the Tripitakas or the three baskets of teaching which are asserted to hold his views are reported by his most close disciples.
3. Buddha's three canonical works are named Vinayapitaka, Suttapitaka and Abhidhammapitaka. The first work connects chiefly with rules of behavior for the congregation (sangha), the second contains Buddha's sermons and conversations and the third contains elucidations of philosophical theories.

#### **Objectives of the Study:**

The main objectives of the paper are –

1. To study the ethical teachings of Buddhism.
2. To highlight the philosophical aspects of Buddhist teachings.
3. To analyse the importance, relevance and implications of the philosophical perspective of Buddha's ethical teachings in the modern life.

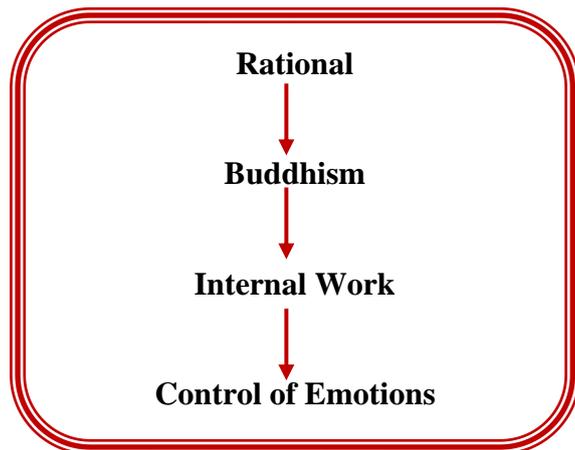
#### **Research Questions:**

1. Are there ethical teachings of Buddhism?
2. Are there philosophical aspects of Buddhist teachings?
3. What are the importance, relevance and implications of the philosophical perspective of Buddha's ethical teachings in the modern life?

#### **Research Methodology:**

The research paper is based on primary and secondary sources. The primary sources connected with Gautam Buddha's religious text book and theoretical perception. The secondary sources are collected from the different sources like- books, articles, journals, research paper, newspaper library work, periodicals, paper clips, internet, website etc. The paper is based on descriptive as well as analytical method with its philosophical context.

**Rational:**



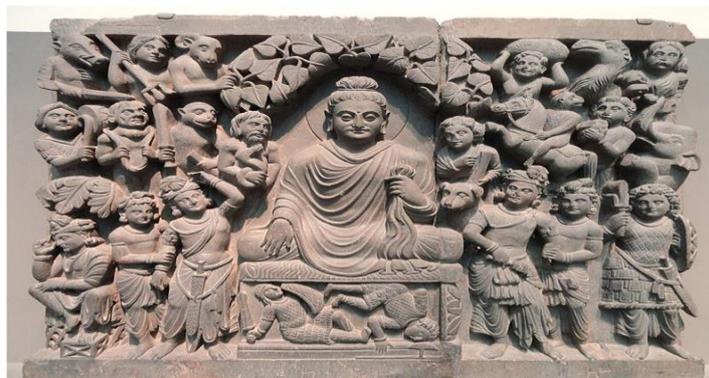
**Significance and Scope of the Study:**

1. The yearning for independently including life, pleasure and power produces suffering-which is ended throughout virtue and thought.
2. Being righteous requires us to value

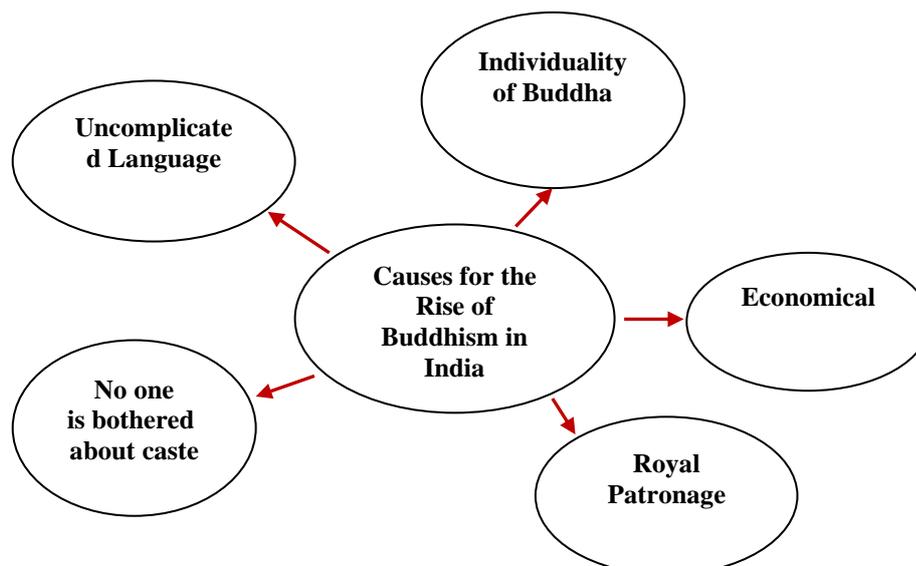
ourselves and others and to be patient, moderate and to uphold an obvious and impartial mind.

3. Personal illumination consists not in justly following rules but in seeing one's position in the universe.

**Discussion and Results:**



**Illumination of Buddha, Kushan dynasty, late 2<sup>nd</sup> to early 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE**



### Moral Idea of Buddha:

1. Buddhism is a non-theistic philosophical and ethical approach of Indian Philosophy, which provides an exclusive path to illumination.
2. Gautam Buddha was beleaguered with grief at the sight of disease, old age and death.
3. Gautam Buddha renounced the world to realize the remedy for suffering and eventually he explored its reason and the way to stop it; which is identified as the Four Noble Truths.
4. Gautam Buddha became enlightened or Buddha and he found the path to peace and harmony on earth and sermonize it to the world.

### Holistic Teachings of Gautam Buddha:

Buddha's teaching is based on the Four Noble Truths.

- i. There is suffering (Dukha):** Buddha said, the whole thing in the world is full of pain. It teaches that all forms of survival are unsure, fleeting and reliant and hence, by their very nature subject to pain.
- ii. Cause of suffering (Dukha-Samudaya):** Buddha highlighted the origin of life's malevolence or pain is in
- iii. the light of his special formation of the fundamental act of dependent origination or Pratityasamutpada.**
- iv. Cessation of suffering (Dukha-Nirodha):** Since unhappiness depends on some circumstances; if this situation is removed,

sadness would cease to exist. This state is called Nibbana or Nirvana in Buddhism. It is entirely extermination of misery, decay and death.

**v. Path leading to the cessation of suffering (Dukha-Nirodha Marga):** Lord Buddha provides a principled and holy path by following which misery may be removed and Liberation gained. This path covers of eight steps or rules and is, hence, called the Noble Eight-fold Path.

### The Noble Eight-fold Path of Gautam Buddha:

The word for ethics or morality used in Buddhism is *Sila*. Sila in Buddhism is one of three divisions of the Noble Eight-fold Path and is a system of behavior which embraces a promise to synchronization and self-restraint with the principal inspiration being nonviolence or liberty from causing harm.

The highlighting novel eight paths of Gautam Buddha are-

- i. Right View or Belief (Samyag Drsti):** Right view is identified as the right understanding about the four noble truths. Correct faith in the four noble truths leads to detachment, self control and harmony. Consistent with Buddha, the understanding of these truths helps moral reformation and leads us towards the vision-Nirvana.
- ii. Right Resolve (Samyak sankalpa):** Right resolve is the willpower to do what is correct and cease from doing what is

incorrect and to deracinate attachment to bodily enjoyment, ill will towards others and wish for doing harm to them.

**iii. Right Speech (Samyag-vak):** Right speech covers in nonparticipation from lying, insult, mistreatment, cruel words etc. and stress on the honesty. One ought to speak what is correct, factual and agreeable and what does not hurt others.

**iv. Right Conduct (Samyak-karmanta):** Right conduct covers in desisting from the obliteration of life, from robbery, sex-indulgence and untruthful, drinking intoxicating liquor etc. Once more, Buddha told that kindness, good manners, compassion and self-sacrifice should be cultured by all.

**v. Right Livelihood (Samyag-ajiva):** Right livelihood highlight one should earn his livelihood by truthful ways. Corruption, theft, dishonesty, trades in arms, animals, liquor, poison etc. all are prohibited and even for the sake of upholding one's life, one should not take to forbidden ways.

**vi. Right Effort (Samyag-vyayama):** One cannot develop progressively unless he upholds a stable attempt to origin out the old evil opinions and prevent evil thoughts from arising a new.

**vii. Right Mindfulness (Samyak-smrti):** Right mindfulness is an essential pre-requisite of right attention. The aspirant should continually remember that the body, mind and everything in the world are not everlasting and this helps us to remain free from accessory and sorrow.

**viii. Right Concentration (Samyak-samadhi):** The observance of one-pointed thought leads the seeker to go beyond all mind-set of pain and enjoyment and lastly to full enlightenment.

#### **Systems of Morality in Buddhism:**

The ethical life is emphasized in all branches of Buddhism. Hence, Buddhists highlight

qualities such as non-violence and sympathy.

1. To abstain from taking life or killing any living being.
2. To abstain from taking what is not freely given.
3. To abstain from sexual misbehavior.
4. To abstain from incorrect speech.
5. To abstain from intoxicating drinks that clouds the mind.

#### **Insinuation of Buddhist Ethics in the Modern Society:**

1. Buddhist moral holistic teachings have a great insinuation particularly in background to our day-to-day life.
2. Lord Buddha teaches to contemplate on love and companionship for all living beings.
3. Consistent with Buddha, hatred ceases by love, annoyance by benevolence, evil by good. Hence, though one may overcome a thousand men in a fight, but he who conquers himself is the utmost winner.
4. In Buddhist philosophy, the primary duty of a man is to wash him of the psychological defilements of greed, hatred and unawareness.
5. Meant for Buddha, if a person's mind is at harmony, then he can transaction with all troubles simply. Thoughtfulness and humankind are the aspects that will have a great notion on everyone rather than money, fame and extent.
6. Consequently, by following Buddha's moral teaching of non-violence, worldwide love, sympathy etc. we can enlarge these qualities and can stop the act of aggression.

#### **Ethics of Buddhism and Human Development:**

1. Basically what are Buddhist principles all about? Simply to live is to act and our dealings and events can have either injurious or helpful consequences for one and others.
2. Buddhist beliefs and morals are concerned with the principles and practices that help one to act in ways that help rather than injury.
3. As said by Buddha all human beings are equal and we must pursue ethical and

principled ideals being good human beings.

4. Psychological development is the only way that can make stronger and control our mind. Mental Development is possible by attention and meditation.

### **Relevance and Importance of Buddhism in the Present Society:**

1. Buddhists think that human life is a series of suffering and revival, but that if one gains a state of enlightenment.
2. Gautama was the first person to reach this state of enlightenment and was and is still today, identified as the Buddha.
3. Buddhist morals are neither random standards invented by man for own practical reason nor are they arbitrarily imposed.
4. Man-made laws and societal customs do not form the basis of Buddhist ethics.
5. Buddhist ethics finds its base not on the changing social customs but rather on the unchanging laws of nature.
6. Buddhist morality focuses as an action, good or bad basing on the intention or inspiration from which it originates.
7. Events that have their roots in greed, hatred or selfishness are considered to be bad - described Akusala Kamma.
8. Actions that are entrenched in the virtues of kindness, love and wisdom are praiseworthy and good - called Kusala Kamma.

### **Findings of the Study:**

The major findings of the study are-

1. Gautam Buddha was first and foremost an ethical teacher as well as a social reformer.
2. Buddha gives importance on the practical problem of human existence.
3. Buddha has given some paths or Noble Eight-fold Path which help us to reach the cessation of enduring or Nirvana. It has an uppermost ethical importance in Buddhism.
4. Buddhist thinks that the morals of ethical life are Dana (charity), Virya (fortitude), Sila (morality), Patience, Dhyana (meditation), Prajna etc.
5. Buddhist maintains on the purity of reason and humankind in life.

6. *Sila* is the observance of norms like that of peacefulness in thought, word and deed; which is the corner-stone of honest life.
7. *Dana* highlights active selflessness and helping those in need of assist.
8. Buddha pronounced neither the extremes of self-pity nor extreme self-mortification.
9. Consistent with Buddha, control of anger leads to enlargement of mildness, control of covetousness leads to the spread of charity, control of lust to cleanliness in love etc.
10. Buddhist morals plays an significant role in Indian Philosophy.
11. Apart from, Buddha no other self-governing beliefs and principles gives us a more exciting communication of universal munificence.
12. Buddha's existence and the teachings will compel the admiration of mankind and give ease to many anxious intellects.

### **Conclusion:**

The Buddha's ethics are based on the stereological need to eradicate pain and on the premise of the law of karma. Buddhist philosophy gave us many things. It inclined the society away from social hierarchy and towards fairness. It permitted and gave impartiality to women and *Shudras* and challenged the traditional philosophy of that period. Buddha gained illumination after meditating under the Bodhi tree and finally broaden his holistic teachings and morality with the help of his Sangha. Buddha himself highlighted the sensible character of his thoughts, supporting philosophical enquiry over spiritual dogma.

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